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January 6, 1949

To: H - Mr. Merchant

From: S/S

From: H - Ivan S. White

SUBJECT: Preparations for Discussion of Problems Relating to Germany
Including Berlin in Aftermath of Western Summit.

1. As you know, a Four Power group will shortly begin meetings in Washington to prepare the Western position on problems relating to Germany including Berlin for the East-West Summit. We assume that the American position should start from the agreed conclusions reached by the Western Heads of Governments at Paris and be developed within the framework provided by them. Unfortunately, there is no official record of the Paris conversations, and subsequent press discussion based on national briefings has created the impression that important differences exist as to the extent and content of the agreements reached.

2. It seems desirable that, as soon as this can practically be arranged, the Secretary discuss with the President the principal conclusions reached at Paris as they can be summarized from available unofficial records. Such a summary has been prepared by H - for Mr. Emler's return and a copy is attached as Tab A. The President will undoubtedly wish either to confirm that his views are accurately reflected thereby or to make any necessary changes.

3. If we assume that the available records are substantially accurate, it would appear that further consideration is now precluded of any proposals, such as that for a guaranteed city, involving a change of juridical basis for the Allied presence in Berlin. While there was general agreement that the Berlin question should be approached through discussion of the all-German problem, the issue was not clearly resolved as to whether the Western Powers should be prepared, as at Geneva, eventually to discuss Berlin separately (it seems reasonable to assume that this is not ruled out). There did appear to be agreement that the Western Powers were not bound by their Geneva proposals, which they would at any rate not exceed, and that tactically it would probably be desirable to start from the beginning in negotiations on Berlin.

4. In any event, the following areas, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive, still seem open to exploration in developing the Western position:

a. Regime of Berlin

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a. Variants of Feasible Berlin Proposals within the Limits Stimulated by the Heads of Governments. Although the formula of not exceeding the Geneva proposals is somewhat ambiguous with respect to items not specifically included in the Geneva proposals, we would assume that it does not preclude consideration of new features which are consistent both substantively and in spirit with the Geneva proposals. Thus, for example, the old alternative (c) of the London Working Group Report of last April might still be dusted off as a possible Western proposal with a somewhat different point of emphasis.

b. Hope of Subverting the Berlin Issue in Discussion of Other Subjects such as Disarmament. This is obviously what the French and Germans would like to do, and if it were a practicable course of action we and the British would presumably likewise wish to achieve such a result. Realistically, however, it does not seem that we can stop at this point without giving thought to the Western posture in the face of continuing Soviet insistence on discussing the Berlin question. From a tactical point of view, of course, the Western Powers will wish to leave open every opportunity during the Summit for subversion of the Berlin issue.

c. Strengthening the Geneva Proposals with Certain All-German Features. Some experts believe that Berlin is primarily a lever which the Soviets are using to obtain other objectives of more basic importance to them. Hence, they reason, if some proposal can be made which promises movement towards the achievement of these other objectives, the Soviets may be willing to ease their pressure on Berlin. The "other objectives" are usually stated in terms of enhancing the status of the GDR so as to move toward its eventual de facto acceptance if not recognition. British thinking seems to tend in this direction. The memorandum which Lord Hood gave you last fall (which was apparently never passed either to the Germans or the French) proposed sweetening the Geneva proposals by evading the rights issue, and by permitting all-German talks under the cover of a four power group. Ambassador Thompson in Moscow has suggested that an extension of the time period in the Western Peace Plan to 7 - 10 years to prove to the Soviets that there would not be a show-down by free elections for an extended period, while the Mixed German Committee provided for in the Peace Plan presumably would be in operation, might provide such sweetening.

We may anticipate a completely negative German and French reaction to any such proposals.

d. More Emphasis on Contingency Plans. In arriving at a final Western position it would be relevant to compare the situation which would be created by carrying out currently agreed Western contingency

plans with

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plans with other possible proposals. The Western Powers must, in fact, realistically relate their assessment of where they will be if they fail to reach an agreement on Berlin with the Soviets with their pre-Summit thinking. If the Soviets go ahead and sign a peace treaty with the GDR, turning over to the latter control of access check-points, a whole chain of contention will be set in motion the ultimate outcome of which will only partially be within Allied control. GDR is preparing an analysis of agreed contingency plans from this point of view. One difficulty is that the Federal Republic did not participate in the formulation of contingency plans and is only generally aware of their contents.

d. New Security Proposals as Part of Peace Plan. Any final revision of the Western Peace Plan will obviously have to be related to discussions in the Five Power Disarmament Group with respect to possible measures of security in a limited area. The strong negative German position on Central European security arrangements is known. United States intentions regarding ultimate partial troop withdrawals will have to be clarified so that these may, if relevant, be incorporated into the Western security proposals.

f. Limited Tactical and Other Moves. Under this heading would come such proposals as that for a plebiscite to be held in the various parts of Germany on the question of a peace treaty. While such a measure would be designed to seize the initiative from the Soviets by focusing attention on the right of self-determination, it would not essentially contribute to a resolution of the Berlin problem.

g. General Tactics. It will probably be desirable to develop in some detail certain aspects of Western tactics at the Summit. These will, of course, have to take into account the possible emulating effect of prospective further Summit meetings on the speed with which an impasse may develop and the Soviets react to it.

5. In the absence of additional guidance from the President, we will proceed where practicable to develop our further thoughts in the various fields indicated.

Attachments:

Summary of Available Records of Paris Summit Meeting (Tab A)

CLEARANCE:

SON - Mr. MacDonney

SR:GDR:Willebrandt:all

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